

The Tolerance in ancient oriental civilizations

قيم التسامح في الحضارات الشرقية القديمة

Mesdoua Wahiba مسدوة وهيبا*

wahibamesdoua@gmail.com

Philosophy University of Oran2/ Algeria

Saim Abdelhakim صايم عبد الحكيم

saimabdelhakim@yahoo.fr

Philosophy University of Oran2/ Algeria

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Abstract

Through this paper, we will attempt to trace the development of the concept of tolerance in Eastern civilizations, where the ancient Egyptians showed religious tolerance, and where different religions coexisted in love and peace. For its part, the Mesopotamian civilization knew another type of tolerance through acceptance of polytheism, which was embodied by the Law of "Sitt Ishtar" and the Law of "Aranmu." As for India, it also knew the virtue of tolerance with religions that contradict the Buddhist philosophy. Confucius lived for the same virtue thanks to his emphasis on human value through "gene" and "li" and transforming moral theories into practical ethics.

Keywords: ancient Eastern civilizations; gods; religious persecution; violence; tolerance.

ملخص

من خلال هذه الورقة، سنحاول تتبع تطور مفهوم التسامح في الحضارات الشرقية، حيث اظهر قدماء المصريين تسامحا دينيا، حيث تعايشت مختلف الديانات في محبة وسلام. ومن جهتها عرفت حضارة بلاد الرافدين نوعا آخر من التسامح من خلال القبول بتعدد الآلهة وهو ما جسده قانون "ست عشتر" وقانون "ارونمو" أما الهند فقد عرفت هي الأخرى فضيلة التسامح مع الديانات المخالفة للفلسفة البوذية. ونفس الفضيلة عاش من أجلها كونفوشيوس بفضل تأكيده على قيمة الإنسان من خلال "الجين" و"الي" وتحويل النظريات الأخلاقية إلى أخلاق عملية.

كلمات مفتاحية: الحضارات الشرقية القديمة؛ الآلهة؛ الاضطهاد الديني؛ العنف؛ التسامح.

* Corresponding author: wahibamesdoua@gmail.com

Introduction

It may seem strange for any researcher to be interested in ancient Eastern civilizations in a time when our minds are dominated by the most diverse scientific and technological discoveries, and in an era in which our thought suffers from the tyranny of the concerns of material life.

The antiquity of these civilizations in itself is a matter of great importance because of the human experience they left behind during which the elements of their religion and values were formed. If we trace the first roots of tolerance, for example, we find that it has developed to take on an ethical, philosophical, and even political and religious dimension.

In the context of building ancient civilizations, the concept of tolerance developed to go beyond maintaining the security and physical stability of individuals, and moved to the field of ideological and intellectual security. Love and brotherhood are among the most important values that the ancient Egyptian civilization bequeathed to subsequent civilizations and religions, so that the Greek historian Herodotus says in his second book: "The Egyptians are more pious than all other human beings and give full attention to sacred rituals... They preceded the peoples of the world in holding public holidays and great processions." And it was from them that the Greeks learned, and the evidence for this is that it has been held in Egypt for a long time, while the Greeks did not celebrate it until recently" (1) (Tastherni, 1996, page E).

From this standpoint, we tried to identify the most important stages of the development of the concept of tolerance in ancient Eastern civilizations: Is tolerance a newly emerging term? Or is it a concept that previously existed in ancient societies?

1. Among the ancient Pharaohs

Revealing the pre-historic era and the era before the ruling dynasty shows the emergence of Egyptian civilization and its youth, and also shows the schism and rift existing in the entity of society and in the soul of the individual, through writings distinguished by a spirit of compassion accompanied by scenes of violence and how other leaders contributed to building society based on New foundations for Middle Kingdom society, then the arrival of the Hyksos 1786-1560 BC.

However, another phase of Egypt's history emerged, which was the era of the empire, which healed the noticeable rift in building the edifice of Egyptian society and tried to create a society in which an atmosphere of reassurance and trust prevailed. However, the inscriptions printed on Seti's tomb testify that man in that era never enjoyed calm and tranquility. Otherwise, Akhenaten's religious revolution and the meanings of spiritual struggle against the attacks of Satan, in addition to its steadfastness in the face of religious persecution at the hands of various authorities and kingdoms throughout the ages, would not have been a new religion, unlike the pagan Pharaonic and Greek religions spread at that time.

Religiously, Egyptian history tells us that the first source of the Egyptian gods goes back essentially to the land of the Nile itself. The Egyptians have always shown religious tolerance within Egypt, as they showed with the gods of oppressed countries, and even if they were forced or decided to build temples to their Egyptian gods, they would deal with foreign gods. Their treatment of their gods in Egypt, and as a result, all forms of fanaticism for doctrine and heretical concepts did not find a place in which to grow except for the Amarna period of Akhenaten. On the other hand, the Egyptian religion throughout its history did not adopt any manifestation of religious persecution. "Akhenaten, who was Amenophis."The fourth, around 1367-1950) who disavowed the claim of the state's affiliation to Amun (Re) and instead offered a religion based exclusively on monotheism to Aten (Athénisme) and changed his name to Akhenaten, and his queen (Nefertiti) shared his name with him, but the king Horewheb, who returned with a counter-revolution in (1335-1308 BC) and abolished this rule after the death of Akhenaten" (3) (Zakkar, 1997, p. 36).

Reading the history of ancient Egyptian religion makes us understand that the Egyptians had reached the concept of an absolute or universal God, despite their inability to dispense with the rest of the gods that they inherited from the past, and despite the fact that history mentions little about Akhenaten, and despite his attempt to present a true monotheistic concept while ending the role of each... Many other gods and their sacred beliefs, but he gained his fame as the reformer and also the only heretic in the history of Egyptian religion. Thus, most Egyptians consider the sun god to be the creator of the universe. However, he is the holiest of holies in every temple. He has more holiness than any other, and every god -

once his divinity is recognized - is the source of power and creation. Therefore, every saint has holiest things throughout the length and breadth of the country, with the first hill being in it, so we see The Temple of Philae Built in the fourth century BC. It is said about it: "This temple was formed before anything else in the world was formed while the earth was still in dense darkness." Other temples made the same claim. (5) (Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Wilson, and Jacobsen, 1980, p. 34).

Perhaps someone who contemplates the history of Egypt and the history of religious beliefs in it will realize that the Egyptian religion has always expressed its tolerance and generosity and has always accepted many new deities coming from outside Egypt into the pantheon of Egyptian gods.

Egyptian monotheism always exists with diversity, and in the state of monotheism it retains and respects the original differences. This is the core of the tolerance that prevailed in prehistoric worship.

2-Religious tolerance in Mesopotamian civilization

The ancient Iraqi thought considered achieving justice a necessary condition for the continuation of political power. Therefore, King Orkagina's reforms focused on social justice and individual freedom for citizens and removed injustices and exploitation from them. The concept or word freedom was known for the first time as "Imarji" in a written document, and he worked to stand against tyranny. Thieves prey on the weak and pledged not to allow the powerful to exploit orphans. This document is considered the first humanitarian law that called for human rights and freedom for the first time in human history. Hammurabi benefited from it when drafting his well-known law.

He also established "Uranmmu" (a set of legislation that seeks to remove injustice and achieve justice. The law of "Sitt Ishtar" agrees with the law of "Uranmmu": (Uranmmu or Angur or Urkur) (2047/2030 BC): It preceded the Code of Hammurabi Three centuries ago, part of the tablets that included this law were found in the city of Nefer, and the other part in the city of Ur, with its emphasis on eliminating violence and establishing tolerance, especially after the conditions of Sumer and Akkad worsened and injustice befell them. .

Both Sharia laws played an important role in preaching the values of freedom, justice, tolerance, and compulsory laws.

3. In Indian civilization and Chinese civilization:

Buddha's mind was preoccupied with the problem of peace. Gautama, who isolated himself from people, abstained from killing the living, by refraining from killing the living. He took off the club and the sword (even though he was once of the Kshatriya class, that is, the class of fighters), and he visited... He abstained from the mistake of dealing with "Izurara", and his heart was filled with compassion, as he was merciful to every being in which life came... and abstained from gossip... This is how he lived as a bond to what was broken - encouraging the continuity of charity between friends, reconciliation between adversaries, and a lover of peace. "Enthusiastic about peace, speaking words that prepare for peace."

He considered fanaticism to be the enemy of religion, so he called on his followers to universal love: "You can transform your energy from one form to another... Ask physicists, ask doctors, the answer is the same. It is impossible to destroy energy... You cannot be spacious, tender, and passionate, as it may be divided into channels." miscellaneous. Sex sometimes, anger at other times, and also greed. Compassion is not a form of energy. Only when all desires and desires disappear, when the body no longer has needs, does your energy transform all your energy into tenderness into mercy" (13) (Osho, 2011, p. 8).

He called for peace and not offending others. He also recommended tolerance, justice, patience, and forgiveness. He believed that it is wrong to return evil with evil. On the other hand, Buddha recommended the necessity of showing compassion and kindness to all living beings, even animals. The twelfth decree issued by "Atoki" stipulated respect for The privacy of others and taking into account diversity and difference, especially religious ones, and that one should not show the virtues of one's religion or brag about it because that would harm other religions. Buddhist teachings also called for avoiding hatred and malice, even toward one's enemies. Among his tips:(Do not let yourself become attached, and do not let the word of evil come out of your lips. Remain loving towards others, friendly and full of love. Do not harbor hatred. Rather, surround those who do not love goodness with good intentions and pure patience... Hatred will not cut off the roots of hatred or violence... Tolerance and acceptance of others are the greatest asceticism because "the greatest pain in life is the inability to express and communicate with others and not to participate..." (14) (Osho, 2011, p. 143).

Buddhism has been known for its tolerant approach towards all other religions and different individual interpretations of Buddhist teachings. Despite the differences that exist between Buddhists in various regions of the world, they are distinguished by the characteristic of accepting others, recognizing each other as Buddhists, and do not reject non-Buddhists on the basis that they are inferior to them and hopeless. For them in salvation and happiness, "...the illness and suffering that haunt human beings happen to the individual person, and the individual person is the one who must cross the path from suffering to peace and happiness, and this realization lies in the decision to respect the imposed differences in the different areas of life" (15) (15) Kohler, 1995, p. 308).

Harmony, non-violence and respect for others are all necessary in order to create an atmosphere of tolerance and coexistence through love, provided that one firmly adheres to the truth "Satyagraha" as a means of active and non-violent resistance. Therefore, we find Buddha adding to his teachings elements that borrow from the teachings of Christ in a way that calls for wonder: "A person must overcome his anger with compassion and remove evil with goodness... Victory breeds hatred because the defeated in misery... it is impossible for hatred in this world to be eliminated by hatred like it, but hatred is eliminated by love." Indian civilization embodied what it believed and what its (Buddhist) philosophy was convinced of, of the values of love, coexistence, and tolerance with different religions, cultures, and practices, and what is contemporary India? It is a reflection of those tolerant values and principles based on the kindness and compassion that Gotama showed in the face of the anger and violence of enemies. Thus, Buddha recorded his name with a golden pen in the field of tolerance, so that he worked to alleviate the violence and suffering caused by war, and that most of this fighting was caused by him. Foreign powers (16) (Kohler, 1995, p. 166).

So, this was an intellectual journey that included the most important principles of tolerance, and even the most important pioneers of this highest moral virtue in India, as it was greatly concerned with how to get rid of suffering. If Buddha viewed tolerance as a matter of non-violence, then Chinese culture and civilization are based on the principle of "Confucianism and Taoism shaped social life.

Humanism based on morals was the characteristic that characterized the philosophy of Confucius. If we ask about the term enlightenment and cultural awareness, we find that

Confucius was like a father and a leader. He was the one who based this on the concept of cultural change, not sudden revolutionary change. This became the right to... Carrying out the Cultural Revolution was one of the most important rights in the fifth century BC, and the justification for this was due to the ability to bring people together in an atmosphere of tolerance and coexistence, far from all class considerations. The main goal of Confucius' philosophy was not to understand the world and explain it in a satisfactory manner. Rather, its first and last goal was how to achieve human greatness, which is the first and last goal. Which constitutes a common denominator between Chinese philosophies, although they differ greatly as a result of different insights into the source of human greatness. While "Taoism" focused its achievement on achieving unity with the internal approach, we find "Confucianism" focusing on developing humanity through the human inclination of the heart and social virtues. Until the new "Confucianism" came by synthesising and combining the two trends.

The moral philosophy of Confucius emphasizes the need for humans to aspire to their humanity in order to find in it the principles of goodness and happiness. The secret that achieves this humanity is, in particular, "Jen," which means human heartedness. A high-status person can never abandon humanity, even for the sake of one meal. In moments of haste and haste, he acts according to it, and in times of distress and turmoil he acts according to it" (18) (Kohler, 1995, p. 335-336).

The followers of Confucius understood that living according to the Jin requires developing the goodness of one's human heart and extending it to others. This is the basis of the famous golden rule of Confucius, i.e. "Treat others as you would like them to treat you, or do not do to others what you would not want them to do to you." (19) (Kohler, 1995, p. 337). "Confucius" realized that his doctrine - which is a way of private life, social behavior and political behavior and not a religious doctrine - in addition to the "Jin" - was based on "Li", which are the rules of propriety, societal etiquette, rituals and rituals that are devoid of... Of puritanism, stagnation, and taking into account social circumstances and occasions, and this "Confucian" system. For the rules of conduct and etiquette, people are accustomed to loving order and obedience, which has made the Chinese people one of the most meticulous people in formalities in history. It also confirmed to every individual that he possesses within himself

a sense of self-respect and respect for others, which is a guide to achieving the "gene" in the present, so when he asked "Yin Yuan" about "Jin", Confucius said: "To control oneself and return to the etiquette of society "Li" that is humanity "Jin"" (20) (Kohler, 1995 , page 337).

Conclusion

Finally, we conclude that research into the values of tolerance in ancient Eastern civilizations clearly indicates that this concept had roots in the most ancient civilizations and religions. It is not only a concept specific to modern Western civilization, but rather has extensions that go back to ancient times. Therefore, the goal of researching this concept is precisely In these civilizations, the error of some concepts is corrected, which consider it a new concept. Its emergence is linked to the philosophers of the Enlightenment, as evidenced by the manifestations of its various forms in ancient Eastern thought, between educating the mind and spreading awareness in order to raise humanity to its highest levels, relying on the development of human selfhood to reach the highest degree of human perfection in His relationship with others within a society based on peace and human values, far from injustice, oppression, and rejection of the other who is different.

footnotes

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